

February 21, 2023

The Honorable Liz Linehan, Co-Chair
The Honorable Ceci Maher, Co-Chair
The Honorable Sarah Keitt, Vice Chair
The Honorable Julie Kushner, Vice Chair
The Honorable Anne Dauphinais, Ranking Member
The Honorable Lisa Seminara, Ranking Member
Committee on Children
Connecticut General Assembly
State Capitol Building, Room 011
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: SB 1047: An Act Authorizing the Commissioner of Early Childhood to Enter into Certain Contracts.

Co-Chairs Linehan and Maher, Vice Chairs Keitt and Kushner, Ranking members Dauphinais and Seminara and members of the Committee on Children:

My name is Jaime Rodriguez, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) and the Advocacy Chair for the Connecticut Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (CTAMFT). I am a resident of Waterbury and own a private mental health practice in Wolcott. I am writing in support of SB 1047: An Act Authorizing the Commissioner of Early Childhood to Enter into Certain Contracts.

At my privately owned mental health practice, Fundamental Family Therapy, LLC, I treat many individuals, couples and families in an outpatient setting. Additionally, I serve many early education centers, including the Meriden Headstart, with staff, teacher and family training programs. These training programs are focused on trauma-informed care, awareness and impact of ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences), 0-5 developmental stages, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Strategies, community resources and supports, among many more. The impact of mental health professionals' collaboration with the early education system cannot be understated. Providing teachers, staff and families with the necessary tools to best serve our most vulnerable children has lifelong effects and helps to promote physical wellbeing, academic attendance and performance, positive social and emotional skills and healthy connections to their community. This population of children and families of children from ages 0-5 is a population for which I hold great passion as a LMFT and mother of four of my own children.

I urge you to support SB 1047, An Act Authorizing the Commissioner of Early Childhood to Enter into Certain Contracts, with an emphasis on contracts with mental health professionals. Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists specifically are well suited for this task as a result of our systemic training to collaborate with both the early education system and the family system.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if I can be of further assistance at advocacy@ctamft.org.

Sincerely,

Jaime Rodriguez, LMFT

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Fundamental Family Therapy, Llc